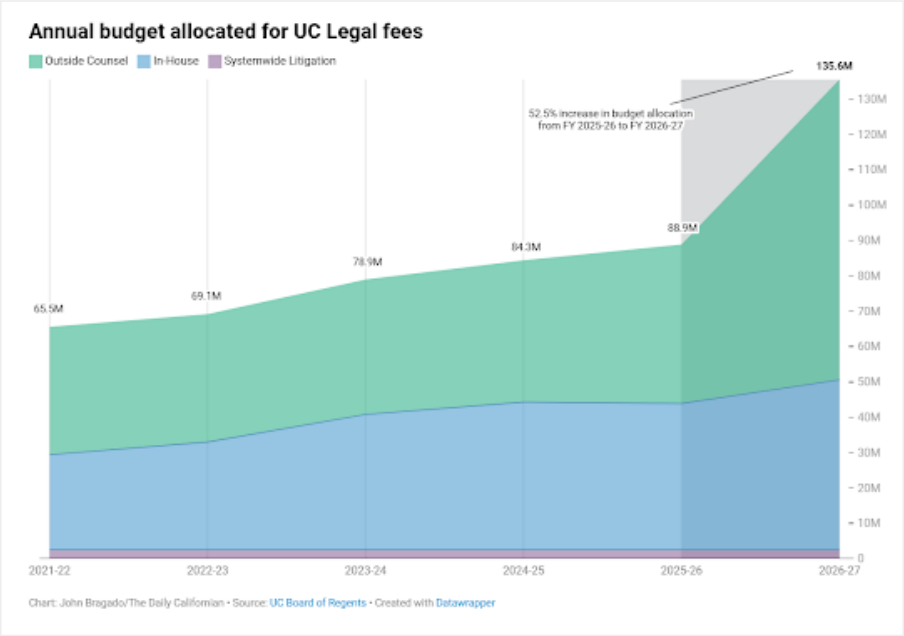
UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Sunday, May 31, 2026

Speaks for Itself



The chart above from the Daily Cal doesn't need an explanation. It speaks for itself. But if you need more explanation:

https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/uc-legal-budget-increases-by-30m-after-tumultuous-year-in-courtroom/article_057aa51b-d1f7-467e-b0be-e09c001efda3.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 358

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- Trump admin drops appeal in AAUP et al. v. Trump
- 2025: The Year UC Faculty Fought Back and Won
- Faculty Join SB895 Rally to Save Science, Save Lives
- Trump Admin Drops Appeal to FA Lawsuit
- Fund Scientific Research in California

Remaking the University

- UC Irvine Is Once Again Laying Off Faculty and Staff to Pad Its More than $800 million in Core Reserves (Guest Post) - 5/24/2026
- From Community Benefit to Rent-Seeking Scam: UC Irvine's Division of Continuing Education (Guest Post) - 5/22/2026
- Standing Up for the UC Means Standing Up Against Zionism (Guest Post) - 5/11/2026

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Remaking the University
- Changing Universities
- California Professor

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Search

UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)

From The Dartmouth: *On May 21, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression president and chief executive officer Greg Lukianoff, who will receive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree at Commencement next month, condemned the state of freedom of speech in higher education at an event in the Hanover Inn... [Dartmouth] was the only Ivy League university to receive FIRE's "green light" rating for its free expression policies in 2025.*

...The Dartmouth Dialogues event — which was co-moderated by distinguished fellow Ezzedine Fishere and Middle Eastern studies professor Jonathan Smolin — was attended by 80 people, according to School of Arts and Sciences event coordinator Tammi Klotz. At the event, Lukianoff argued that higher education must take "seriously" points of view that many would "find deeply offensive" because "you only know what is true when you're allowed to actually test it."

"Unfortunately, I think way too many campuses have taken on this moral role where they actually think that, 'because my norms find what you might want to say highly offensive, I am going to stop it,'" he said. He criticized administrators in elite academic institutions who try to "rebalance" the unequal power they see in American society with "[their] judgement on what must and must not be allowed."

"That kind of thinking is almost always motivated reasoning and … self-serving, and frankly, overwhelmingly represents the point of view of upper-class Americans," Lukianoff said. "It ends up being a cultural imposition of the upper-class norms on everybody else." ...

Full story at https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2026/05/sanchez-the-worst-of-both-worlds-fire-president-and-2026-honorary-degree-recipient-greg-lukianoff-condemns-the-state-of-higher-education-at-dartmouth-dialogues-event.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Dartmouth

Money Blocked

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Trump administration's use of funding freezes to take aim at higher education institutions continues as the National Science Foundation has placed limits on new*

- UC-AFT

Topics

politics (2508) UC (2163) UC Regents (1920) health care (1457) State Budget (1286) governor (1141) diversity (1038) UC budget crisis (979) UC-Berkeley (930) pension (664) pensions (594) admissions (566) athletics (563) tuition (538) CSU (425) transportation (404) UC-Davis (379) online education (340) UCOP (318) uc retirement (315) traffic (307) ucrp (301) audio (291) UC enrollment (285) new hotel-conference center (282) UC-San Diego (271) enrollment (263) community colleges (253) LAO (237) UC-Irvine (186) fund raising (174) UC-Santa Barbara (164) UC-San Francisco (161) UC-Santa Cruz (159) controller (154) faculty center (144) UC-Riverside (143) ballot propositions (132) CalPERS (122) UC-Merced (118) Master Plan (113) faculty pay (109) Yudof (90) UCRS retirement (62) parking (62) Faculty Association at UCLA (61) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) copyright (36) UC Berkeley (35) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (22) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) Regents (15) State Contribution (14) UCOF (14) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UCpolitics (4) UC Irvine (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Santa Cruz (2)

Blog Archive

- ▼ 2026 (548)
  - ► June (4)
  - ▼ May (104)
    - Speaks for Itself
    - Straws in the Wind - Part 358
    - Money Blocked
    - Arrest
    - Celebrating Bond - Part 3
    - Archive
    - Straws in the Wind - Part 357
    - Surprise! (You have to know math to do science! Wh...
    - Ratified
    - Straws in the Wind - Part 356
    - Latest Scam
    - Surprise! (You have to know math to do science! Wh...
    - Might be Legit

grants for four highly selective universities, Nature reported. As of April 9, the NSF has placed a "hold" on future awards to Duke, Harvard, Princeton and Yale Universities, according to internal agency documents obtained by Nature. Since then, minimal new funding has been allocated to those institutions, the documents show.

In 2024, the four received a combined total of 218 new NSF grants, for which researchers are still able to access funds, Nature reported. But this fiscal year they only received 13 new grants, with none awarded to scientists at Duke or Harvard since April 9... It is unclear how long the limitations will last or why those four institutions were singled out...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/05/29/nsf-freezes-new-funding-4-institutions.

Note that while litigation over freezes of existing grants tends to be successful, it is more difficult to deal with delays or just negative decisions on new grants or grant renewals using litigation.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Duke, Harvard, politics, Princeton U, Yale

Saturday, May 30, 2026

Arrest

Note: It is unclear from news reports whether the case described below is related to incidents reported earlier this month that led to hiring of private security by sororities.*

From the LA Times: *A man accused of attacking multiple female UCLA students overnight and attempting to kidnap or sexually assault them was arrested Friday, authorities said. The suspect was identified as Olumuyiwa Akindahunsi, a 29-year-old homeless man not affiliated with the university, according to the UCLA Police Department. As part of their investigation, police said they recovered zip ties, duct tape and paracord nylon rope. Akindahunsi was arrested on suspicion of robbery, sexual battery, attempted kidnapping and assault with intent to commit a sex offense and is currently being held at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Inmate Reception Center in lieu of $2.3-million bail, police said...*

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2026-05-29/ucla-serial-assault-suspect-arrested-police-find-zip-ties-duct-tape-rope.

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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/05/insecure.html; https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/05/insecure-part-2.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:25 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Celebrating Bond - Part 3

Straws in the Wind - Part 355
Dissolving a Bond?
IT workers unionize at UC
Straws in the Wind - Part 354
Lawsuit
No Passing Zone
Straws in the Wind - Part 354
Two (Closed) Meetings Today
Graduation Speakers
Straws in the Wind - Part 353
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 166
Confident Retiree Webinars
Straws in the Wind - Part 352
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 165
Row
Straws in the Wind - Part 351
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 164
Life around Harvard Square
Straws in the Wind - Part 350
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 163
I Never Promised You a Rose Bowl? - Part 18
Straws in the Wind - Part 349
The latest scam
The May Revise
Straws in the Wind - Part 348
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 162
The One That Didn't Get Away (but is behind closed...
The one that got away
I Never Promised You a Rose Bowl? - Part 17
Straws in the Wind - Part 347
Balanced Approach
Straws in the Wind - Part 346
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 161
Wait!
Straws in the Wind - Part 345
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 160
Watch the Regents Meeting of May 6, 2026
Straws in the Wind - Part 344
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 159
Watch the Regents Meeting of May 5, 2026
Straws in the Wind - Part 343
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 158
News while traveling
Degree+
Straws in the Wind - Part 342

From the Daily Bruin: *The California Senate voted Wednesday in favor of a bill that would put a $12 billion bond for scientific research on the November 2026 ballot. Senate Bill 895 – which state senator Scott Wiener proposed in January and the UC sponsored in March – will now head to the State Assembly for a vote. The bill would establish the California Foundation for Science and Health Research, which would distribute the $12 billion – collected through the sale of state bonds – to research projects.*

If the bill passes in the Assembly, it will be sent to Gov. Gavin Newsom's desk for approval. If he signs off on the bill, it will be put on the November ballot...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/05/27/california-senate-passes-uc-sponsored-bill-proposing-12b-research-bond.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC

Archive

From the Daily Bruin: *UCLA historians launched a revamped digital labor history archive in April, preserving materials from movements led by Southern California unions. The Memory Work Research Initiative at UCLA – which the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment oversees – digitized documents, images and flyers on an online archive called Power from the Past.*

UCLA historians started the initiative in the basement of the Service Employees International Union Hall more than 10 years ago, said Toby Higbie, a history professor. SEIU represents about 2 million public sector and property service workers across the United States, according to its website... The IRLE also created a social media series to highlight different labor history stories weekly...

As the IRLE prepares for its 80-year anniversary, Higbie said its archival work is evolving – and is nowhere close to finished...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/05/22/ucla-historians-preserve-documents-photos-in-power-from-the-past-online-archive.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 357

Last Cash Before Revise
Close
Is there a prize for academic creativity?
Straws in the Wind - Part 341 (Let's just play Pom...
Stopped
Paid Off
Is AFSCME being pushed out of Kaiser?
Straws in the Wind - Part 340
Former Westside Pavilion
Celebrating Bond - Part 2
Straws in the Wind - Part 339
The Hacking - Part 2
Mystery Car
Straws in the Wind - Part 338
Priorities
Changing times at the management school
Straws in the Wind - Part 337
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 157
Don't tell the governor
Straws in the Wind - Part 336
Already Ahead - Part 2
The Hacking
Assault at Royce and Young Research Library
Legal Apology
Straws in the Wind - Part 335
Insecure - Part 2
Investigation
Security Planning for 2028 Olympics
Straws in the Wind - Part 334
Insecure
Just a thought
Straws in the Wind - Part 333
How Related?
Health Watch
Dickson Awards
Straws in the Wind - Part 332
Second thoughts at the legislature
Straws in the Wind - Part 331
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 156
Poof! You're a Pauper!
Straws in the Wind - Part 330
The Way We Live Now

► April (110)
► March (111)
► February (106)
► January (113)

► 2025 (1139)
► 2024 (832)

From the Columbia Daily Spectator: *...As Barnard President Laura Rosenbury took the podium to open the [graduation] ceremony, her remarks were met with boos from the audience. During the presentation of degrees, a majority of graduates refrained from shaking Rosenbury's hand, marking the third year in a row graduates have protested the president at the ceremony as the college has seen controversial policies surrounding free expression and faced a mounting debt crisis in recent years...*

Speaking directly to the graduates, Rosenbury said, "You go out into the world today as ambassadors for the value of women's education, for the power of meaningfully engaging across differences, and the belief that curiosity, knowledge, and empathy can change the world for the better, that you can change the world for the better." Some students booed in response. Rosenbury continued on, speaking louder into the microphone, "But first, please embrace the joy in this room. This Barnard joy will be with you every step of the way. Our community only gets stronger with time." This time, jeering ensued from the audience.

Since beginning her tenure in 2023, Rosenbury's administration has faced opposition from the faculty and student body as the college has seen layoffs amid a debt crisis, as well as crackdowns on political speech and sanctions on expression...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/05/21/barnard-celebrates-2026-commencement-rosenbury-met-with-boos-for-third-consecutive-year/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Barnard

Friday, May 29, 2026

Surprise! (You have to know math to do science! Who knew?) - Part 2 (Non-Statement)

Yesterday we posted about the open letter from STEM faculty asking that the SAT be reinstated for admission of students intending to go into STEM fields. In response, the chair of the Academic Council (the Academic Senate's systemwide entity, released the statement below -

► 2023 (828)
► 2022 (719)
► 2021 (710)
► 2020 (914)
► 2019 (671)
► 2018 (595)
► 2017 (666)
► 2016 (715)
► 2015 (765)
► 2014 (704)
► 2013 (776)
► 2012 (839)
► 2011 (738)
► 2010 (431)
► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

which, to be blunt, is really an evasive non-statement. All it says is that BOARS is thinking about admissions issues, something that is always true and by itself means nothing.

Statement from UC Academic Senate Chair Ahmet Palazoglu in response to letter from UC STEM faculty

UC Office of the President, May 27, 2026

UC Academic Senate Chair Ahmet Palazoglu made the following statement May 27:

In light of concerns raised by UC faculty about student preparedness for undergraduate study, in March I called upon our systemwide faculty Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) to address timely topics tied to students' college readiness and UC's admissions process. BOARS is in the process of proposing a roadmap of policy work and partnership-building with other state and K-12 education leaders in the next academic year and beyond.

Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/statement-uc-academic-senate-chair-ahmet-palazoglu-response-letter-uc-stem-faculty.

Here is what a hypothetical real statement would say:

In light of concerns raised by UC faculty about restoring the SAT as one criterion of admissions, I am forming an emergency subcommittee of BOARS to review these concerns over the summer and issue an interim report as a discussion item for the Regents meetings in September.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 11:14 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC, UC Regents

Ratified

From the Daily Bruin: *A union that represents more than 40,000 workers – and that has been in negotiations with the UC for more than two years – voted to ratify a contract with the University... The American Federation of State, City and Municipal Employees Local 3299 – which represents service, patient care and skilled craft workers across the UC – reached a contract with the University hours before it was set to begin an indefinite strike May 14.* ***About 96% of participating members voted to ratify the contract****...*

The new contract does not include housing provisions, which union members previously demanded... However, a ***ballot measure that would support housing for UC employees gathered enough signatures to appear on the California ballot in November, according to AFSCME Local 3299's website.*** *The University of California Support Staff Down Payment Loans measure would require the UC to create a down payment loan system for first-time homebuyers who have worked for the University for at least five years. The program would be capped at 300 loans per year, and the loans would cover up to 20% of the purchase price of the house. Once the signatures receive state verification, the initiative will appear on the state ballot.*

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/05/22/afscme-local-3299-employees-vote-to-ratify-contract.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 356

From the Columbia Dail Spectator: *Graduating students booed acting University President Claire Shipman, CC '86, SIPA '94, for the second year in a row as she delivered her address at Columbia's undergraduate Commencement ceremony... For both [years,] Shipman, who took office 14 months ago, and the class of 2026, Commencement marked the end of their turbulent tenures at Columbia, which have encompassed sweeping federal scrutiny, campus protests, and mass student arrests.*

Shipman, in particular, has faced intense criticism for striking a $221 million deal with President Donald Trump's administration in July 2025 after it canceled $400 million in grants and contracts to the University in March 2025.Last year, graduates also booed Shipman during her address. The outcry, however, was far more intense, as the ceremony came two months before the University reached its deal and two months after Columbia partially complied with several of the Trump administration's demands in an attempt to restore funding...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/05/21/shipman-caps-contentious-presidency-with-appeal-to-generosity-of-spirit-at-undergraduate-commencement/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Columbia, politics

Latest Scam

NOTICE SCE CUSTOMERS
Due to recent wildfire settlements under California Public Utilities Code 379.6, public utilities are now required to reduce fire risk and localize power generation to reduce strain on the centralized power grid.
Programs funded through existing utility charges, including the Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP), support distributed energy initiatives available to qualified homeowners.
Qualified homeowners may be eligible for programs designed to:
• Support on-site power generation
• Provide emergency home backup services
• Lower power rates by eliminating delivery costs
Customers not enrolled may pay 37% more for electricity to cover delivery costs.
Assessments by state-licensed program administrators are being scheduled this week at no cost to homeowners. To reserve your assessment while funding is available, or for questions regarding eligibility, call:
CALIFORNIA ENERGY INITIATIVE
1(877) 743-1143
www.cainitiative.com

If you are a Southern California Edison (SCE) customer, you might have found this card in your mailbox. It is not from SCE. It is not an official anything. When yours truly typed the phone number shown into Google, up came a scam warning that a similar card had been distributed up north to PG&E customers. There was also a scam warning about cainitiative.com, a web address on the card. (I don't know if DWP customers have gotten similar cards.)

Someone is trying to sell you something - or worse. Discard the card.

Thursday, May 28, 2026

Surprise! (You have to know math to do science! Who knew?)

Back around pandemic time, UC (really the UC Regents) abandoned the SAT for undergraduate admissions. This step was taken despite the recommendations of an Academic Senate task force that it be retained as one of a group of criteria for admissions. UC never had an SAT-only policy. At the time, other universities took similar steps, although some have returned to testing.

The impetus for dropping testing at UC was the idea that testing impeded diversity. However, the Senate report had noted that the way the SAT was used at UC did not have that effect. Again, UC never had an SAT-only policy.

The first (public) sign of trouble was a recent report from UC-San Diego math faculty that incoming students lacked basic high school math skills.* Now, from the LA Times:

*More than 600 University of California faculty members, led by mathematicians at UC Berkeley, are calling on the system to reinstate standardized testing requirements for science, technology, engineering and mathematics applicants, saying that six years of test-free admissions has not reliably assessed readiness and professors are often teaching middle school math to incoming students. Without standardized testing in admissions, professors said they don't know whether incoming students can handle college-level math. The open letter, addressed to top UC leaders, asks for SAT or ACT exams to be required beginning in fall 2027 and for STEM faculty to be given formal oversight of readiness standards in their majors...***

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Text of letter:

To the UC Regents, UCOP, Academic Senate leadership, and the people of California:

We write as University of California mathematics faculty, joined by faculty from other STEM disciplines. UC has long served students from every background and has been a powerful engine of social mobility for the people of California. That public trust must be protected for future generations. Today, UC's mission is at risk. To preserve that mission:

We call for the reinstatement of the SAT/ACT mathematics requirement for applicants to STEM majors beginning with the 2027 admissions cycle, alongside STEM faculty oversight of readiness standards and admissions practices affecting those majors.

Over the past five years, we have seen a widening divergence in mathematical preparation levels within the same classroom. This trend indicates that current admissions practices do not provide a sufficiently reliable check on mathematical readiness for STEM majors. The UC San

Diego Senate–Administration Workgroup on Admissions report documents this crisis in stark terms: in the last five years, the number of students whose mathematics skills fall below high school level increased nearly thirtyfold; moreover, 70% of those students fall below middle school levels, reaching roughly one in twelve members of the entering cohort. These findings are corroborated by data across our campuses. For example, for three consecutive years, 20-30% of UC Berkeley first-semester calculus students who participated in mathematical diagnostic testing displayed severe preparation deficits.

Basic mathematical fluency is analogous to literacy; without it, success in university-level STEM becomes structurally unattainable for students. We now observe preparation gaps so severe that instructors must reteach middle-school mathematics while simultaneously teaching the material students need for sciences, engineering, economics, and other quantitatively demanding fields. UC has been a national leader in supporting under-resourced students to do well in mathematics. However, UC has finite resources and can help only so many students, and only when the preparation deficits they need to overcome are within reach.

Furthermore, the widening spread between underprepared and well-prepared students creates polarized courses, weakening the foundation available to many students and making it harder to teach at the level required for advanced STEM work. UC is increasingly unable to provide its students with the education needed to become leaders in California's scientific, technological, and economic future. We are already seeing the warning signs: longer pathways through prerequisite material, reduced readiness for advanced coursework, and growing pressure to dilute quantitative rigor. Left unaddressed, these trends will lead to declining graduation rates, longer time to degree, and reduced completion of STEM majors, with consequences for California's highly skilled STEM workforce.

California's public higher-education system is a coordinated pathway through community college, CSU, and UC that aligns students with the instruction best suited to their preparation.

The current admissions system is undermining this structure by admitting students directly into STEM UC programs without a reliable measure of whether they are prepared to succeed. This serves no one well.

The widening abilities gap followed the 2020 elimination of the SAT/ACT, a temporary measure that has now become a permanent vulnerability. This outcome was explicitly predicted by the Academic Senate's 2020 Standardized Testing Task Force (STTF) report, which warned that removing these tests would eliminate a vital predictor of college success and obscure the impact of severe high-school grade inflation. Unfortunately, the outcomes cautioned against in that report have now materialized in the data across our campuses. All other leading STEM institutions, including the UC's primary peers, have resumed using SAT/ACT in their admissions to ensure foundational fluency. For the University of California to remain a global leader in STEM, it is essential to restore these objective benchmarks.

Rather than measuring advanced mathematical ability, the SAT/ACT tests provide a critical baseline: a common external check that students have the core mathematical fluency required for university-level STEM coursework. SAT/ACT scores can also identify high-potential students in under-resourced schools whose talent might otherwise go unrecognized because of limited access to advanced coursework.

The SAT/ACT mathematics requirement is not an obstacle to equity; rather, it is a prerequisite for it. Failing to measure preparation gaps does not remove barriers; it moves them into the classroom, where they become harder to overcome. An admissions process that ignores foundational readiness does a disservice to the most vulnerable students. True access requires an honest assessment of the support students need and where, within California's public higher-education system, they can best receive it.

The current admissions metrics, based primarily on GPA and essays, can no longer reliably distinguish readiness for university-level STEM majors in an era of severe grade inflation and AI-assisted application essays. We therefore call upon the University of California to:

1. Reinstate SAT/ACT Requirements: Require SAT/ACT mathematics scores for applicants to STEM-intensive majors, effective with the 2027 cycle.

2. Validate Academic Readiness: Use these scores as a common measure of basic readiness to provide a necessary counterweight to inconsistent high-school grades.

3. Establish Faculty Oversight: Ensure STEM faculty oversight of readiness standards and of admissions policies that materially affect STEM programs.

4. Mandate Institutional Accountability: Test admissions criteria against student outcomes, and revise them if they fail to predict readiness.

Obscuring preparation gaps harms both students individually and the University collectively. It offers the appearance of access while undermining the chance of success. UC must ensure that every student is challenged appropriately, supported in closing real gaps, and given a path toward a degree that retains its full value in the global economy. Restoring objective data and introducing faculty oversight will allow the University to support students effectively, provide institutional accountability, and preserve the standards that make a UC STEM degree meaningful.

Source: https://ucstudentsuccess.org/. About 70 UCLA faculty signed the letter.

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Note: Not addressed in the letter is the significance of having two tracks of admission. Those who want to pursue STEM fields (and maybe some others such as economics) would have to submit SAT scores. Those who want to be admitted to study other fields would not have a testing requirement. Many high school grads don't have firm ideas about future studies or careers. Many change their minds after they enroll.

Finally, there is the larger issue of why K-12 California students are graduating without basic skills.

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*https://www.kpbs.org/news/education/2025/12/02/uc-san-diego-is-trying-to-solve-a-remedial-math-problem.

**Full story at https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2026-05-27/uc-math-professors-demand-return-of-sat-for-stem-admissions.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:07 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC, UC-San Diego, UCLA

Might be Legit

Yours truly has been told that some UC employees and emeriti/retirees may be eligible for some funds due to an antitrust settlement with Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Info at https://www.bcbssettlement.com/.

If you are eligible, you might get some kind of notice of such a settlement.

Even though the settlement is real, there could be scams associated with it. If you get an email or text about claiming benefits, be cautious about clicking directly on the message or calling phone numbers directly on the message.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 355

From the Chronicle of Higher Education: ...*The University of Oregon announced Thursday that a "significantly lower" number of first-year out-of-state students have enrolled for next academic year, resulting in $65 million in necessary cuts. The university will also freeze hiring and pay, and limit non-essential travel.*

President Karl Scholz had warned last month that cuts may be on the way, noting that the competition for out-of-state students was "fiercer than it has ever been." At the time he also cited international-enrollment challenges and "rising costs due to geopolitical tensions." ...

Full story at https://www.chronicle.com/liveblog/finance-live-updates-union-warns-layoffs-are-coming-to-muhlenberg-college.

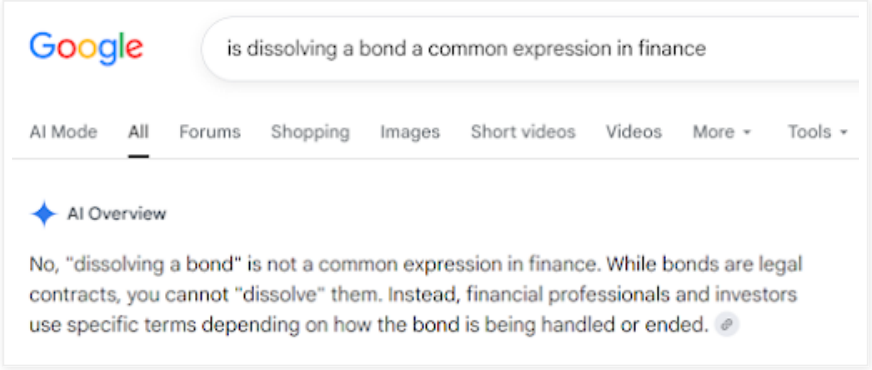
Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: u of Oregon

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Dissolving a Bond?

According to the Daily Bruin, the chancellor will deal with a deficit in the athletics program by "dissolving a bond." Does anyone have any idea what that means in this context? Now, I've heard of *floating* a bond. But you don't normally float (offer to sell) new bonds to deal with an ongoing budget deficit. I've also heard of "the bonds that tie," but not ones that dissolve.


Google
is dissolving a bond a common expression in finance
AI Mode
All
Forums
Shopping
Images
Short videos
Videos
More
Tools
AI Overview
No, "dissolving a bond" is not a common expression in finance. While bonds are legal contracts, you cannot "dissolve" them. Instead, financial professionals and investors use specific terms depending on how the bond is being handled or ended.

Poking around on the web, yours truly found that "dissolving a bond" might mean selling bonds that you already own as part of your financial assets. So what bonds is UCLA holding that it plans to "dissolve"?* Basically, if selling off assets is being used to finance a deficit, it doesn't really matter what assets are being cashed in. What matters is that you are running down assets (reserves) which can't go on forever.

The Bruin also talks about a campus-wide "deficit." But without a complete financial statement, who knows what that means? The last time we had a financial statement was when then-CFO Agostini produced one. But then he was quickly fired for saying some Very Bad Words, as blog readers will know. And, as blog readers will further know, his estimates for revenue and expenditure were as of last September. Presumably, someone has updates. Or maybe not. As we have also noted on this blog, it is not clear that Murphy Hall has the ability to produce up-to-date numbers.

Excerpts from the Bruin:

UCLA will dissolve a $50 million bond to reduce UCLA Athletics department's budget deficit and consolidate its chief financial officer and administrative vice chancellor roles, Chancellor Julio Frenk announced in a Tuesday morning State of the Campus address. Frenk outlined a three-step plan to address UCLA's financial shortfalls at the inaugural address, which university administrators, student government leaders, faculty and UC Office of the President representatives attended. Frenk said in the speech that curtailed state and federal funding and rising operational costs impacted UCLA's finances...

The consolidation of administrative roles [of CFO and Administrative Vice Chancellor] comes as Administrative Vice Chancellor Michael Beck announced that he will retire at the end of 2026. Frenk said the university hopes to increase efficiency with the combination of offices...

UCLA is projected to generate a $220 million budget deficit for the 2025-26 academic year, UCLA's Interim CFO Reem Hanna-Harwell said in a March 26 campuswide email. Hanna-Harwell's figure came more than a month after former CFO Stephen Agostini alleged to the Daily Bruin that financial mismanagement from administrators led to a projected $425 million deficit for the same year...

Frenk also said the university is reviewing its real estate holdings, including by evaluating the financial performance and longevity of university-owned properties and seeking out opportunities to diversify its holdings...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/05/26/ucla-to-combine-administrative-roles-give-ucla-athletics-50-million-frenk-says.

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PS: Just a final question: Did any of the "university administrators, student government leaders, faculty and UC Office of the President representatives" who attended the talk ask what dissolving a bond means or, more importantly, what the heck is going on with UCLA's budget?

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*According to the chancellor's speech, some funds from past litigation are being held in the form of bonds. https://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/julio-frenk-2026-state-of-the-campus-full-speech.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:37 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, UCLA

IT workers unionize at UC

From the San Francisco Chronicle: *As AI continues to shake up the tech sector and fuel mass layoffs, more than 2,000 University of California IT and technical workers have voted to unionize, expanding what organizers say is now the largest tech worker union in the U.S.*

University Professional and Technical Employees-CWA 9119 said Thursday that 2,100 IT and technical employees across the UC system voted to join the union, bringing the union's tech bargaining unit to about 8,400 workers...

The newly represented tech workers include application programmers, business systems analysts, data systems analysts, database administrators and other IT workers, the union said...

Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/uc-tech-worker-union-california-22269143.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 354

From Science: *Grants managers at two of the U.S. government's largest funders of scientific research have recently placed unprecedented limitations on the ability of U.S. scientists to publish with co-authors from other countries, researchers say. Units of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are privately directing grantees to request permission in advance for any co-authorship with a scholar affiliated with a foreign institution, even if all the work was done in the United States. NASA, meanwhile, is reportedly telling some grantees that papers co-authored with researchers in China may have violated its rules.*

Neither agency has publicly issued new formal guidance describing these requirements. Instead, officials are informing grantees individually, leaving researchers confused and concerned. In several cases, NIH grantees say they have been asked to remove published papers with foreign co-authors from annual progress reports to the agency. Observers say the policy creates an incentive to preemptively remove foreign co-authors from forthcoming papers.

...Since at least 2003, NIH has required U.S.-based investigators to obtain agency approval before publishing a paper with a "foreign component," defined as "performance of any significant scientific element" of the research outside of the U.S. But now, NIH managers appear to have changed the definition of foreign component to include any co-authorship with a scientist affiliated with a foreign institution, even if all work for the project occurred in the U.S., says Kristin West, director of research ethics and compliance at COGR, a nonprofit that represents research universities on regulatory matters...

Full story at https://www.science.org/content/article/u-s-researchers-face-new-restrictions-publishing-foreign-collaborators.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics

Lawsuit

From the Daily Cal: *The Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against the UC system [Tuesday] alleging an antisemitic and "hostile educational environment." The lawsuit alleges that pro-Palestinian protests beginning after Oct. 7, 2023, caused systemic discrimination and violence against Jewish and Israeli students at UCLA and that UCLA neglected those concerns. Additionally, the suit alleges that UCLA faculty is systematically biased against Israelis. It claims that many faculty supported the encampment, used discriminatory hiring practices in the Undergraduate Students Association Council's Cultural Affairs Commission against "Zionist" students and "failed to consider the depth of UCLA students' racism against Jews and Israelis."*

This suit comes following the DOJ's investigation into UCLA's compliance with Title VI, which prohibits federally assisted organizations such as universities from discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin. The lawsuit argues that Jewish and Israeli students at UCLA were subjected to harassment and a hostile environment created by the pro-Palestine encampment, impeding their access to educational opportunities and resources...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/doj-sues-uc-over-alleged-antisemitism-at-ucla-for-2nd-time-this-year/article_9c1c573d-f839-4d30-9769-21e3191b15a6.html.

Text of lawsuit: https://dn721605.ca.archive.org/0/items/2-final-hjaa-report.-the-soil-beneath-the-encampments/UCLA_us_v_regents_of_university_of_california%205-26-2026.pdf.

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It might be noted that - as this blog reported yesterday - the Regents committee dealing with the conflict with the feds met Tuesday, i.e., the day the lawsuit was filed. Possibly, the Regents had some advance notice of the filing. But since the meeting was closed-door, we will never know.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics, UC, UC Regents, UCLA

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

No Passing Zone

The Legislative Assembly met on May 14 via teleconference. On the agenda was a consolidation of Senate committees, primarily justified by the difficulty of getting all the seats on committees filled by faculty. However, after much prior effort, there apparently was doubt that the consolidation would fulfill the goals of committees that would be abolished:

From the official report on the vote (distributed via email):

Proposal to Realign Select Committees of the Academic Senate

Legislative Assembly members voted via the Academic Senate Data Management System on the motion to repeal Divisional Bylaw 67.1 International Education (commonly known as Committee on International Education) and amend Divisional Bylaw 65.1 Undergraduate Council. The Legislative Assembly voted 35 Approve, 71 Oppose, and 33 eligible members abstained. This motion included divisional bylaws and thus required a 2/3 affirmative vote of 139 eligible voting members present for approval. As only 25% of eligible members present voted in favor, the ***Legislative Assembly did not approve this motion****.*

Legislative Assembly members voted via the Academic Senate Data Management System on the motion to repeal Divisional Bylaw 75.2 Library and Scholarly Information (commonly known as the Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication) and amend Divisional Bylaw 75.3 Council on Research. The Legislative Assembly voted 56 Approve, 44 Oppose, and 39 eligible members abstained. This motion included divisional bylaws and thus required a 2/3 affirmative vote of 139 eligible voting members present for approval. As only 40% of eligible members present voted in favor, the ***Legislative Assembly did not approve this motion****.*

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The Assembly DID approve a new Digital Humanities undergrad degree and department.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 354

From Inside Higher Ed: *The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Board of Trustees [last] Wednesday voted to reject the appointment of a women's studies professor whose hire had been approved by faculty and administrators. The decision is the latest example of the UNC trustees using what is typically a rubber-stamp vote to deny the hire of a green-lighted faculty candidate. Kiran Asher, a professor of women's, gender and sexuality studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, first interviewed for the distinguished professor position in January 2025 and followed what she called a "perfectly normal" hiring process. Provost Magnus Egerstedt told her two weeks ago that her hire would be put up for the board's approval at the May 13 meeting. During an open-session voice vote at the meeting, one unnamed tenure candidate was rejected.*

[As of] Saturday, Asher had yet to receive an official notification about her employment outcome...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty/tenure/2026/05/19/unc-board-rejects-hire-women-and-gender-studies-professor.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, U of North Carolina

Two (Closed) Meetings Today

#1: NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

There will be a Closed Session1 meeting of the Special Committee on the Selection of a Student Regent on May 26, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland.

Source: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/may26/notice-special-committee_may-26.pdf.

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#2: TO THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Because the membership of the Advisory Group on Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues ("Advisory Group") includes five members of the Regents' Governance Committee, there exists the potential for having present a quorum of a Regents' Committee when the advisory committee meets.

This notice of meeting is served in order to comply fully with pertinent open meeting laws.

On Tuesday, May 26, 2026, there will be a Closed Session, Special Meeting of the Regents' Governance Committee concurrent with the Advisory Group to discuss Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues

(Closed Session Statute Citation: Litigation [Education Code section 92032(b)(5)].)

The meeting will convene at 4:00 p.m. at 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland and adjourn at approximately 5:00 p.m.

(Advisory Group members: Regents Anguiano, Cohen, Hernandez, Matosantos, Milliken, Reilly, Robinson, Sarris, and Sures)

Source: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/may26/meeting-notice_federal-may-26-2026.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:05 AM No comments:

Labels: UC Regents

Monday, May 25, 2026

Graduation Speakers

We noticed two announcements of UCLA graduation ceremony speakers recently:

One of UCLA's most iconic alumni is coming home to celebrate the next generation of Bruins. Six-time Olympic medalist **Jackie Joyner-Kersee** will deliver the keynote address at the 2026 UCLA College commencement ceremonies on Friday, June 12, in Pauley Pavilion...

"It is truly an honor to return to my alma mater, UCLA, and speak to such an extraordinary group of graduates," Joyner-Kersee said. "UCLA helped shape not only my athletic journey but also the woman I have become. To stand before the students and share a message of perseverance, purpose and belief reminds me that greatness begins with faith in yourself. Always believe that your dreams are possible and then go out and make them a reality." ...

Dr. Julio Frenk will deliver the keynote address for the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health's commencement ceremony on Friday, June 12, 2026. Frenk, chancellor of UCLA and a distinguished professor in the department of health policy and management at the Fielding School, is also a fourth-generation physician.

Prior to joining UCLA as chancellor in January 2025, Frenk served as president of the University of Miami, from 2015 to 2024, and was the dean of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health from 2009 to 2015. In addition to Frenk's leadership in higher education, he served as the federal secretary of health of Mexico, from 2000 to 2006, and was the founding director-general of the National Institute of Public Health in Mexico, one of the leading institutions of its kind in low- and middle-income countries...

Full announcements at https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/jackie-joyner-kersee-speaker-2026-ucla-college-commencement; and https://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/julio-frenk-2026-ucla-fielding-school-commencement-address.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:30 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, health care, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 353

From The Dartmouth: *Former communications office assistant director of social media Micky Bedell posted three projects she used as part of a "knowledge base" to create and edit social media content for the College on the Dartmouth Claude enterprise portal. One of the projects, titled "Dartmouth Social Caption Writer," was last edited in March 2026, while the two other projects — titled "Dartmouth Social Carousel Brainstorm" and "Dartmouth Social Caption Editor" — were last edited in April 2026, according to documents obtained and reviewed by The Dartmouth.*

A "knowledge base" consists of prompts and files uploaded to a Claude project, which other members of the enterprise group with access to the project can use to "provide context" to the Claude chatbot in their own individual chats, according to Anthropic's website. In this case, the enterprise group includes "all campus community members," including students, professors and staff, according to an email announcing the creation of the enterprise group sent to campus by the Information, Technology and Consulting office on March 30.

College spokesperson Jana Barnello wrote in an email statement to The Dartmouth that Bedell... departed for reasons unrelated to her use of AI...

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BRAND VOICE
Human and relatable. Confident and proud, but not boastful. Approachable and helpful. Emphasizes collaboration and
partnership. Emphasizes the "and" rather than "or" — Dartmouth transcends traditional educational categories.
PRESIDENT BEILOCK'S KEY INITIATIVES
These are ongoing strategic priorities. When a story connects to one, it's worth noting — but don't force the
connection.
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Full story at https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2026/05/dorton-sapper-claude-comms.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Dartmouth

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 166

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences could lay off up to one quarter of its staff this summer as part of a sweeping administrative overhaul that would consolidate departments, centers, and institutes into shared administrative "clusters," according to two people familiar with the plans. The proposed structure, developed by the FAS Task Force on Workforce Planning with support from McKinsey & Company, would likely replace many unit-level administrative roles with staff who serve multiple academic units, according to an internal slide deck obtained by The Crimson.*

The overhaul is intended to help close FAS's projected $365 million budget deficit. But it would also mark one of the school's most significant staff reorganizations in years, with layoffs likely to strongly impact department administrators — staff members who manage finances, human resources, and personnel matters for individual FAS units...

The proposed reductions in FAS staff positions would follow similar cuts at the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, which laid off roughly 15 percent of its staff in October. But many FAS department administrators are not represented by a union, leaving them with few formal protections if their positions are eliminated. Several have worked at Harvard for decades...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/5/20/administrative-restructuring/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Sunday, May 24, 2026

Confident Retiree Webinars

Confident Retiree Webinars provide you with the knowledge, tools and resources to enjoy a comfortable retirement.

Attend the final webinar in our new Legacy Planning series, ***Essential Steps for Survivors of UC Retirees: Accessing UC Benefits and More*** and learn about:

- What UCRP (pension) payments are made after a retiree's passing
- How to apply for UCRP benefits
- Important documents needed to access UCRP benefits
- Health and Welfare benefits for survivors
- Other sources of income
- Important contacts and resources

Thursday, June 11, 2026
1:00 p.m. PT
Register

Friends and family are encouraged to attend.

About the Legacy Planning Series
This webinar is the last in UC's three-part **Confident Retiree** series called **Legacy Planning–Peace of Mind for You and Your Loved Ones**.

Together, these sessions are designed to help UC retirees and their families prepare for the future by protecting savings, organizing personal affairs, and ensuring survivors can access UC benefits when it matters most.

Additional resources
We've included some helpful links below to resources mentioned in the upcoming Part 3 webinar, ***Essential Steps for Survivors of UC Retirees: Accessing UC Benefits and More***:

- **Essential Steps to Access UC Benefits: A Checklist for Survivors of UC Retirees**
- **UCRP Special Durable Power of Attorney Fact Sheet**
- **Social Security Administration**
- **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: Taking Control of Your Finances: Help for Surviving Spouses**

The slide decks and recordings for *Part 1: Preserving Your Savings for Future Generations* and *Part 2: Getting Your Affairs in Order: Essential Planning for Peace of Mind* are currently being updated to meet accessibility standards. Once available, they will be posted on the **Webinars Overview** page of myUCretirement.com.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:30 AM No comments:

Labels: uc retirement

Straws in the Wind - Part 352

From the Washington Post: *MIT is doing less research and enrolling fewer graduate students as a result of federal actions, the university president warned... Federally funded research on campus is down more than 20 percent compared to this time last year, MIT's president, Sally Kornbluth, told the campus community in a video message, and the number of new federal research awards is also down more than 20 percent. ...Graduate student enrollment will also decline significantly in the coming academic year, she said; outside of two programs that are still in the midst of admissions, the number of grad students will be 20 percent less than it was in 2024 — about 500 fewer students. MIT's loss is emblematic of the shrinking of American science caused by Trump administration actions that are affecting labs across the country.*

Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education, said he expects to hear similar assessments coming from other leading research universities. "This is the first of many of these kinds of alarms that will be ringing," he said. But at MIT, the reduction in research funding is exacerbated by the impact of a sharply increased tax on its endowment returns. Most colleges and universities are exempt from taxes because of their nonprofit status and educational mission. MIT expects to pay about $240 million a year for that tax, which was increased to 8 percent this year by Congress and applied to only a handful of elite schools...

Full story at https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2026/05/15/mit-president-blames-federal-policy-shifts-big-drop-research-campus/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: MIT, politics

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 165

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard faculty voted to impose a roughly 20 percent cap on A grades beginning in fall 2027, approving the College's most aggressive attempt in decades to reverse grade inflation and reshape academic standards. Faculty voted 458 to 201 for the first plank of the three-part proposal, which will limit A grades in undergraduate courses to 20*

percent of enrollment, with flexibility for up to four additional A's. The measure passed with 69.5 percent of votes cast.

Faculty also approved a companion measure to use average percentile rankings, rather than GPA, to determine internal awards and honors. That measure passed 498 to 157, with 76 percent of participating faculty in favor. But faculty rejected the proposal's third plank, which would have allowed courses to petition to opt out of the A cap if they were graded on an unsatisfactory, satisfactory, and satisfactory-plus basis. That measure failed 292 to 364.

Together, the votes represent a sweeping intervention in Harvard College's academic culture — one that will sharply reduce the share of A's and place new constraints on grading decisions traditionally left to individual instructors...

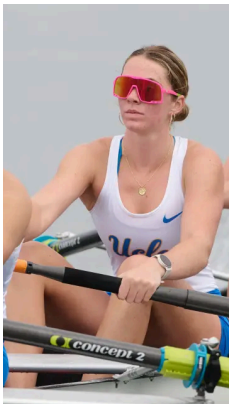
Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/5/20/fas-passes-a-grade-cap/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Saturday, May 23, 2026

Row



From the California Post: *Claire Prindiville wakes up not knowing if this will be the day. The day that her symptoms come back. The day that her legs betray her again. The day that her vision falters, or her ability to use the bathroom is out of her control. Doctors have told her there's a 60% chance that she'll have to battle these same despicable conditions again, and if they return they might be worse than the first bout. Somehow, none of those possibilities crosses the UCLA rower's mind as she rises at 5:28 every morning except Sunday thanks to an alarm that beats the roosters...*

When Prindiville was a junior in high school, persistent headaches landed her in the emergency room. Doctors just sent her home with medication. Her pediatrician diagnosed her with a stiff neck, and she started acupuncture, thinking nothing of it.

Eventually, [after a major attack, her familly] learned that Claire was suffering from a rare neurological autoimmune disorder called myelin oligodendrocyte glycoprotein antibody-associated disease, or MOGAD. There is no known cause or cure for the disease in which the immune system attacks the protective coating of nerves in the central nervous system, impairing their ability to send signals from the brain to the rest of the body...

Having rowed for Gonzaga, Matt Prindiville told his daughter that his old sport might be an option at [UCLA]. Even though she clocked an exceptional time on a rowing machine, coaches felt her form was too raw and she was too prone to injury. They cut her. Devastated, she wrote an email asking for another chance to prove herself. Her coach called two hours later, accepting the offer. "With Claire," her father said, "there's a strong component of just advocating for herself."

Showing continual improvement, she not only made the team but eventually landed a scholarship. Combining superb strength, endurance and a relentless pursuit of mastering proper technique, she's now one of the top rowers on [the] team...

Full story at https://nypost.com/2026/05/16/sports/why-ucla-rower-claire-prindiville-isnt-disheartened-by-rare-disease/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:30 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 351

From Reuters: *A longstanding diversity and inclusion requirement for U.S. law schools is teetering amid mounting pressure from the Trump administration and Republican states. The American Bar Association council that oversees law school accreditation voted... to eliminate a rule that requires law schools to demonstrate their commitment to diversity in recruitment, admissions, and student programming. The rule has been suspended since February 2025, after Republican President Donald Trump returned to the White House and began cracking down on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts...*

The change would not become final until the ABA's House of Delegates begins to consider it as early as August and then debates revisions. That approval process could push the diversity rule's elimination to sometime in 2027...

Full story at https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/american-bar-association-votes-eliminate-dei-rule-law-schools-2026-05-15/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 164

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard asked a federal judge Monday to dismiss the Department of Justice's lawsuit accusing the University of failing to protect Jewish and Israeli students, arguing that the Trump administration's claims are outdated and legally deficient. In a 49-page motion filed in the U.S. District Court of Massachusetts, Harvard's lawyers argued that the government failed to plausibly allege a continuing violation of Title VI, which bars discrimination in programs that receive federal funding. They also contended that the Justice Department cannot use the lawsuit to claw back nearly $1 billion in already spent federal grant money. The motion is Harvard's most forceful response to the DOJ's March lawsuit, which alleged that the University was "deliberately indifferent" to antisemitic and anti-Israeli harassment after Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023 attack on Israel.*

The government has asked the court to impose sweeping remedies, including the appointment of an outside monitor, a bar on future federal funding, and restitution of federal grants issued during the period of alleged noncompliance. Harvard's lawyers rejected that account..., writing

that the complaint relies on "a snapshot in time that does not exist today" and ignores a long list of steps the University says it has taken to combat antisemitism...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/5/19/harvard-doj-antisemitism-dismissal/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:10 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Harvard

Friday, May 22, 2026

Life around Harvard Square

WANTED: Philosopher
Seeking a philosopher with PhD (or ABD) and teaching experience to tutor me for 1 hour per week on a topic of their choosing, as well as assign readings in preparation (20 page maximum, 10 if particularly dense). Open to Western and Eastern philosophy as well as theology. This is for my personal curiosity and interest, and not connected to any academic or professional goal.
Rate: $100/hour, cash or venmo
Schedule: Weekday afternoons, before 4p
Location: A coffeeshop in either Porter or Harvard Square. I will buy you a coffee and a pastry of your choosing. Or, weather permitting, a walk accompanied by my mostly well-behaved dog.
Requirements: In addition to credentials and teaching experience, as stated above, at least a modicum of social grace is desirable. Open to male or female tutors.
If interested, please reply to the below email with your bona fides and two good
Request Night
EGG HUNT
BACKROOM
ELM ST, SOMERVILLE, MA • DAVIS SQUARE
DANCE LESSON 7:30PM MUSIC 8PM
APOLLINAIRE THEATRE COMPANY

Seen on the bulletin board of an ice cream shop.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:30 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Straws in the Wind - Part 350

From the Yale Daily News: *This year's graduating seniors were first years when OpenAI released ChatGPT. As the first class with the opportunity to use large language models like ChatGPT during every year of their college career, most seniors have now incorporated artificial intelligence into their lives to assist them for various purposes, from aiding with problem sets to researching theses. According to an anonymous survey conducted by the News and filled out by 172 seniors, 91 percent of the class of 2026 have used AI for schoolwork. Only 9.1 percent of students surveyed said they had never used AI for schoolwork. A majority of students — 67.5 percent — reported using AI sometimes, often or very often.*

More than 75 percent of respondents said they have used AI in a problem set. About 64 percent of respondents said they have used AI to write a paper, while 48.5 percent of the surveyed seniors said they used AI to write their senior theses — slightly less than the 51.5 percent that said they did not... Male respondents were more likely to report that they used AI for schoolwork than female respondents. While 16.7 percent of male respondents said they used AI "very often" for schoolwork, only 1.6 percent of female respondents said they did. According to the survey results, students majoring in the sciences were most likely to report AI use for schoolwork, followed by those in the social sciences, those in interdisciplinary majors and those in the humanities...

Full story at https://yaledailynews.com/articles/91-percent-of-senior-class-has-used-ai-for-schoolwork-news-survey-finds.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:20 AM No comments:

Labels: plagiarism, Yale

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